

# The Wobbly Wheel

Poems by Damon Freed

Damon Jared Freed  
1100 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Sedalia, MO 65301  
201.892.9429  
damonfreed@gmail.com

Chief Editors: Damon Freed  
Chief Designers: Damon Freed

Production by Damon Freed  
Printed and bound by Lulu

This book is typeset in Times New Roman.

©2020 Lulu

Front Cover by Damon Freed, “The Wobbly Wheel”  
Back Cover by Damon Freed

Printed in The United States of America

First Edition  
Copyright ©2020 Damon Freed

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted  
in any form without the written permission of Damon Freed.

ISBN #978-1-71662-766-8

# The Wobbly Wheel

Poems by Damon Freed

# Contents

1 + 1 = 3 or something... maybe 4. - 9

7 Days and rest - 11

911 - 13

A Cup of Blood by My Side - 14

A Dimension of Mind – 15

A Free World - 17

A Spiral - 19

A Summer Breeze - 21

Axelrod and The Wobbly Wheel - 23

Blameless - 24

Bullet - 27

Captain America - 30

Commerce and Art - 32

Confronting Whiteness - 33

Damon - 35

Disconnection Notice - 38

Flowers - 40

Gently - 42

Harshly - 43

Inside the Dream - 44

Jack, the Man - 45

Keep Writing - 47

Like a Bald Eagle into the Sunset - 49

Moon - 51

Movement - 52

Night's End - 54

Old Enough - 56

Oppression - 57

Our Hero - 59

Paradise Found - 60

Perfection, for John Dorsey - 62

Poem for Brianne Humphries - 63

Republicans - 64

Signs - 66

Skyscrapers - 67

Slovenly, to Stuart, my friend of friends - 69

Smoking - 70

Spiral - 71

Stand the Test of Time - 72

Star-Crossed & Found, On the Holy Ground - 73

Still - 75

Stuff, isn't Art! - 76

Survival of The Fittest - 77

The Alpha and the Omega - 78

The Balance - 79

The Black Knife - 80

The Bully - 81

The Cuties of Song - 83

The Drive Thru - 85

The Idiot Winds are Blowing Strongly - 87

The New York Sound - 89

The Painless Skies, for my friend Angel Gomez - 92

The Potential, after Justin Horn - 93

The Quilts are Sewn - 95

The Snail - 97

THE TRUTH - 99

The Willing - 100

This is It - 101

Touch - 103

Two Things I Ain't - 104

Upon Listening to Charles Bukowski - 106

Vomit - 109

Writing - 110

You Gotta Hold On - 112

Your Beautiful Shows – 114

Artist Bio – 115

## **1 + 1 = 3 or something... maybe 4**

I'm tired of mutherfuckers not getting it wrong and not losing. You might think that sounds absurd to you, but it's the truth. Not everyone can win all of the time. And that is the reality. There was never a time when learning took place in public according to me, because that recognizes losing. It takes admitting you're wrong about this or that. Flip flopping according to the Bush administration and others. One cannot change their mind in the public's eyes these days.

So, here we are. Standing among the fallen war of a pandemic gone South. A pandemic of lost empathy for immigrants and minority citizens.

More people have fallen, died, from this disease of Covid19 than in any other time of wars. And you think voting for a Leader Who Says things like Pocahontas, and grab em in the pussy is winning! You're fucking nuts!

And you think me, because I change my mind from time to time exists in this place only, well, you must be out of your minds! So, here is what I have to say to your political asses that think in only two ways, North or South! Grow up.

The world was universal upon its beginning. This nonsense of not allowing other parties to speak is nonsense. Voting for a woman is not nonsense. Voting for abortion, not nonsense when you put yourself for a moment in the hands of a dictator. And I'll say, this. You'll miss me when I'm gone.

In the world, I'm here to tell ya, there are more than two sides to everything!  
You've heard the expression... What's done in the dark comes to the light. And  
what does that mean, except that a third hand is involved! Always.

$1+1=3$  or something... maybe 4.

Because when religion occurs, it makes 3, and life goes on. Into 4, or something  
like it. And I shrug lightly from the sound of it, at the sound of religion's  
forcefulness.

## 7 Days and rest

God says a man shouldn't be alone,  
But I'm still alright chewing on this bone,  
Just an old dog sniffing the trail,  
From here to heaven's gate.  
Or am I a cat chasing its tail?

And the birds are veery old.

And the fish are sometimes called feeesh, by men in sheets from here to Alabama  
and Mississippi!

But sheesh, this isn't a fire,  
It is simply a sentence in the midst of dire circumstances of love.

And before Adam was Adam, and Eve was Eve,  
It was written that Man was made, and that she was she.

Yeah, I read a bit of Chinese today,  
But you decide if it's a synthesis, or Thee Way?

It is simply what happens when the library of God,  
Comes to a boy with a bod so sweet and soul gone sour.

You see, I covered beneath the book's weight upon climbing thee steps  
To the woodshop after looking for the spirit upon its pages.

The Bible.

I searched for its page on which it STOOD.

And upon the wall it then gave a wink within a hood,  
And I found meaning therein.

7 paintings like the days of the week,

7 paintings all smudged in ink,

Yes, 7 paintings.

One day, two days, three days, and four.

Some light, a night, some earth, some sea,

A dome!

Five days, six days, seven and I rested.

Yes, God's love was tested!

But most of all, my own.

With a leash and a whiplash of a tail,

And me in my mighty throne!

911

You'll never know the rage I have  
The cage we've been locked into  
The age of regret  
The innocent look of ages  
The sages to come let you out  
The savages with the clout  
The nonstopness to it  
The fucking respect it takes to  
Halter the ages from getting to us  
The hexes from never forgetting  
The weeping at times unforgettable  
The muscle in all the ways knowable  
And you say, who am I?  
Now you know.

## **A Cup of Blood by My Side**

I woke up  
Scratched my back with a knife  
Sheathed it  
Put a smile on my face  
The sun's embracing god  
Clean shaven  
Cravin' bacon  
And some drinkable rays of sunshine  
Orange juice  
And a bagel  
Buttered and toasted  
Hopped in my car to drive  
With a cup of blood by my side  
Coffee  
To get me there  
Anywhere

## **A Dimension of Mind**

Drawing the light from my bedroom in the ward,  
Gifting my sight and effort to the Lord and to a  
Man of whose name I cannot remember. Who was  
Silent as a pinned in sheep. Who probably couldn't  
Remember his own name in that place. A military  
Man, whose name I've forgotten, who admired me  
And I his way with words and bashfulness. His  
Candor once he opened up! His savvy honesty or  
So it seemed. He looked a little like Sal Williams at  
His best. Yet he wrote like himself to the praise of  
The people in cell block six. Or at least it felt that way  
Once downstairs, actually down the hall eating three  
Square meals a day. Or else, staying in your room, on  
Guard, eating snacks, like Gushers, and coffee, black  
Coffee from the machines. And night's mechanisms  
Came alive at night to the sounds of flight in the distance.  
A courtyard at night where I was punched in the face  
For disobedience of an unearthly and far fetched tone.  
Where security should have stepped in to prevent the  
Mishaps, but punishment comes and goes in ways unknown  
To me. So as the red vomit and blood stew exited my face,  
I stood firm in grace, yet ANGRY at her, this giant of a  
Bitch. She was taken off into the hands of men, pinned in  
For an extra 6 months afterwards. While I headed home  
The next week into the arms of my parents' vehicle.

And sunsets come in all colors, but cyan and magenta is  
Best at night after a fright from a snake that nearly died  
From too much sun whose soul must have ascended days  
Earlier. And truck drivers dodging Crows were assholes  
In the daytime when all I wanted was to drink my coffee  
And smoke my cigs in comfort, not next to machismo bone  
Heads. But I've said it before and I'll say it again, the smoke  
Bellows by the hands of gods in this place to be and I have  
Dodged them like wasps in the sunlight of days behind the studios  
Of gentlemen's artistry. Back home now. Eating and stirring  
In the AM's. With them. My parents, them watching their television.

Yet, I turn now to the punch bowl as my lighter sits next to me  
On my desk of writing! The freedoms are fierce, here. But not  
Always, as the mind tends to drift into courtyards with fences  
8 feet tall and chained, into bedrooms with single beds side  
By side divided in between with older men shouting over and over  
That they're not gay, and into shared bathrooms with spewing  
Inmates, and into lunch lines of power, and into old ghosts of  
Thoughtfulness from within them. Cheers, my friends, as I resume  
My fighting for what is real and what is not in this world of men,  
And women.

In this world of men, and women!

## A Free World

Forty-two years and sewing my oats!  
You know, after eleven years of showing,  
Reassurance comes and it goes,  
Like showboats.

Feeling no more secure than when I started –  
I can say the edge has its perks.  
In ways.

I may not stick to one look, well, a single aesthetic,  
—But I've been myself every step of the way!  
From the dark of the night into the light of the day.

...and, it may not be my way to publish poems with others,  
But, when someone notices it'll be the day!

Hell, I've been pounding these streets since I don't know when.  
At least since then.

And rocks have edges like razor blades to tape,  
But I don't cross that line these days.

I just shake my head from left to right and it's enough of a fight against the  
feeling of it,  
When the feeling creeps in.

Where it comes from, I don't know, that feeling of murder, the suicidal tendencies.

But, so long as I keep on trucking the hard way I'll do good  
By it.

When gas tanks run dry, when skies cry, when the money flies.

Girls get scared. But the flowers around this place are  
At least enough to keep marching onto a new day.

## **A Spiral**

A man is born, from one life into the next,  
Walking as if to search for himself,  
To see external beauty along the way.  
It is like a spiral inward.  
Bound to home.

Along this spiral it feels, at times  
Disconnected from its source,  
Forgetting,  
And then you're found again.

The pathways narrow towards an end,  
  
But really, it's not that way.

It's this way:

As the spiral appears in the mind's eye,  
So does this man.

Further down his path.

Smaller yet gentler

To an end,

The end.

## **A Summer Breeze**

In the auburn sunset, I see you.  
Golden locks flowing.  
All dangling still, yet flowing.  
Cascading to effortless winds,  
Suntanned and bleached, but barely.  
Hand in hand...  
Down sandy beaches...  
With swimsuits on,  
Virgin drinks in hands...  
Seagulls as we stand, hand in hand.

As we sit in front of it all.

We walk a little further out into the light approaching darkness...  
With wet feet,  
Warmed by beach waters under foot.  
Graininess, the crustiness wiped off once dried to our calves and thighs,  
Knee high.  
Wrestling in the sands of times.  
A gentle kiss.  
In the auburn of days.

Our towels dusted off.  
The tides by our sides.  
The ocean's tides!

A dream, yet undreamed!  
A story, yet unwritten...

A little boy is smitten with wealth on the insides (me, that is) –

Because your bright and golden flowing hair is enough to get him there.

And perhaps, the silver of my wisdom is but a dream to you,

A comfort, under foot, or merely a bottlecap to cut you with, or an aluminum can  
shining on the ugly beaches of yesterdays?

But the reality is,

My giddiness of heart is enough to elevate your dress in the daytimes.

A simple summer breeze, depleting, just after my glimpses upon your sultry  
thighs.

The depth of a poem, to be bottled up, seawater on seawater, and sent into your  
sea, her ocean, deeper than a man's.

## **Axelrod and The Wobbly Wheel**

There was once a family of four wheels and one spare tire  
Attached to one was the axelrod of ages  
In the family of ages  
Was an ageless wonderboy  
His name is DAMON

Now, once he got going fast enough the Axelrod would slip into place but he  
never could  
So he thought about it all the time  
How could he fit his wheel to her axel  
And he thought

Well. His wheel became wobbly once in a while due to bad pressures  
So, he filled it up with the air of centuries to make the axel fit into it

But sometimes, when he gets to thinking too much accidents occur on the byways  
and highways of yesterday's accidents  
And now, the wheel speaks to his pressures in the days and is tried to hers!

She isn't lonely anymore, now that he has reassured her of his accidental  
sideways glances! But boys will be boys and girls too, so they get blue together  
every now and then, together.

And through His eyes they are reassured, together.

## Blameless

The same old haunts aren't going to work this evening.  
Once inside for months on end working 'round the clock,  
Backed into a corner from Covid19, a beer at the new place  
Is best! The place where the same ol' songs aren't playing,  
Where the atmosphere is too nice for my taste. But where the  
Appreciation runs two ways from their appetites yet settled,  
And mine is hungry for chances unknown to me. So, I sit  
Down at a bar where copper lines walls inside and out,  
Where the public is tamed by design! Where behavior is  
Disputed while there... given opportunities work out in this  
Place to be. Where my book will go up on the shelves of the  
Place given I abide by them. And that's my way in this world  
Of gin and sinning young ladies. Where, if I'm lucky, the ones  
Of this world who need it will turn the pages of time in this place  
To be. Where I will read someday to the audience without a micro-  
Phone! In a manner of speaking. Because when reading it's lights  
Out in the places to be in this city by the Train Station. And  
Kat Ryan is there in this place to be but she doesn't even know it  
Yet! Hah. And it's a mental mind-bending way that has you  
Going this way from here to there, and me as well, in this place  
To be by the tracks headed through ecstasy. Oh man, that beer  
Tasted so good. Just sitting there at the bar with her in a brood.  
My bartender is a friend, and I shouldn't laugh at her professional  
Manner, but damnit if she isn't that way sometimes, and me, also.

She's an artist. She hates it, being referred to as such, but by God, Felicia, own it. That's what I say! So shit, just be one. It's that Easy. Well, hah! It isn't. But damn if you can't call yourself one With that hairdo and nice outfit. The men told me you might be Working one day I go in and to be on guard. And it's hard With the sight of you, but, things come and they go around here Like the wind. But I suppose I should sell my soul to the new-Comers when they arrive from up the street, to find the beat.

I mean, shit, the end of days is advertised all over town and it's Got me frowning to the sounding off of preachers in this town To be! And the Mennonites up the street fuel my words sometimes With too much coffee, and I covet them like a rat does hopping On down the streets of this town to be lit up from jelly beans. Damn The luck if they aren't making it in this town to be! And I'm ramping Up here at 29 past 10PM. And I'm zooming-up my poetry online when Friends come around these dayz. But hell if that's not the way to Do things in this town gone rotten from government! Well, maybe It isn't, but damn if I don't obey mostly. And that's the truth ruth my gal gone good From money! Just recall all those bad days When the money wasn't around and you'll Go back one day. Or, maybe you won't. The Bills get stiff once in a while in this town to Be in. I mean stiff, like dying. And I'm crying To the sound of them all, in these dayz gone Sour from gin. The acid from dayz goes bye- Bye from too much of it in the pockets or else

It's the other way down the sockets of men  
In bars to cars outside from too much wind in  
The airs of the places to be.

## **Bullet**

Money's thin

Wallet's skin

Don't pretend

Skim by

On tea

And cigarettes

The grey of my breath

To kill you by

The pocket's empty

Close

Anyhow

The 15<sup>th</sup>

Comes soon

Four days  
Of the acetic life  
Which  
I am good at  
An icebox  
Beer  
Whiskey  
Frisky  
But not late  
Risky  
But not by fate  
Steady  
As the hand  
On the gun

My bullet

To your forehead

Just beneath

Your bun

For fun

## Captain America

It's lunchtime and the sun is beating down,  
Sweat wiped from just above my brow, running around  
Doin errands with a fat burger hangin out my mouth.  
I can't wait to find her between the streets racing from A to B.  
Once I get enough cash, I'm gonna take her out! But for now  
I'm diming it from here to there. Because someday we will know  
How to write the types of checks that don't bounce!

Add it up! A career costs as much as two in this year on this  
Planet gone good from too much wine and worry. So, with my  
Head to the stars I'm weaving in and out of cars delivering love  
To and from the places to be, under the bright of this sun! And its egging  
Me on here, that big Bright yellow yolky Sun, and I'm angsty enough for two  
Beneath this Moon as well within these nights that are breezy with love.

I do love her!

Don't have a clue yet how she's feeling about me, but I been lookin at her with  
My two Big Blues and a razor against my cheek and neck in the days and the  
Nights. Cashin these checks of love for her and I. Riding against the sky in these  
days to be!

Fantasy reigns, it might be the truth, but here in this smallish town  
Of people with gin in hands, sinning to the white lightning outside  
In parking lots with friends smoking on chili dogs and crushing

Beers outside the bars, on porches, back decks, and in cars this  
Fat burger's got it made, with my cute lil lemonade blonde workin  
For hire in a coffee shop down the street and I just got a fresh pair of tires  
Underneath this motorcycle of love, Beneath this chopper of Love, sittin above  
Its stars and stripes.

Wouldn't take much to make this bike a two-seater and we could even ride a little  
Further as I smoke this heater to the sound of luck and love beneath her in this  
city for hire,  
And this gun's for hire!

## Commerce and Art

Where does love start, and end?  
To whom does it touch?  
To whom will it send?  
Does it cost too much?  
Or does it touch the soul.  
What's its goal in the end?  
And who is its keeper?  
The hallow man, or the reaper?  
The sheep herder, or the knowledge of thee old?  
The client or museum?  
Where does it go in the end?

You see, these questions are worth our time!  
Perhaps without them no one would spend a dime –  
And art wouldn't be yielded at all, and nor would it find  
A soul to design it. Or the time to find it, in time.

## Confronting Whiteness

Every day that I confront whiteness  
I find in myself a better person  
I look to these letters and realize that person  
When I sit down to read them, in Black.

When I set out to read Langston Hughes,  
Or Maya Angelou, or when I listen to the blues,  
Manish Boy is a lightweight tune, compared to  
Kind of Blue in the News. Coltrane said it best,  
It Moves in Waves, the ideas of the Caves and back.

And I'm somewhere in between white and black,  
When confronting the grey of my cigarette smoke haze in this place.  
Race is there, whiteness is there, blackness too, and myself.

When I reach for the Moon... when the black night is too much.  
I think to myself, why is it that I need this night?  
And I don't, but I do. So I tell myself I do, over and over again.  
And what is sin? And/or whiteness? Except the difference between you and I's  
skin color.

So once July comes, you just think to yourself, in that heat,  
Why all the girls are so neatly dressed, and the boys on the street.  
Blues and reds, the colors of their heads! Purples and greens the colors of their  
dreams.

And Yellows and Oranges, well, what are they for except that someone must close the doors  
Behind themselves in Love. So every day I confront whiteness here in this room.

I find the time to bless the saviors of this world, then. So I learn to dance like the butterfly,  
And sometimes in Love I sting like a bee to let them know I'm here doing what I love.

And yes, I'm a color and you are too, but they are too many to count in my estimations,  
But someone is taking the score, and what do you know, I just walked right through your front door.

A little brown man, farting and standing with whiteness, farting and yelling to all the whiteness  
That is given. Smiling and singing in a low baritone, to "The National." And it's a moan, a grown, a low-pitched tone below the best of us that makes this world go around. And yeah, we'll box, we'll fight, with words in the night, and in the days. Me beneath my haze, and you above it.  
And who is it, or what is it, and where is it, in this night? This haze.

Well, it's a ghost in the night and days upon days upon days upon days of time and before then, even.

## **Damon**

We passed a church – A Studio.

The sign read, “DANGER: OPEN GAS LINE - NO SMOKING OR OPEN FLAME”

I held a candle next to it just to see if I could!

A trident, a candelabra – THE TRINITY!

I set the candle down next to it for a while to no avail.

The sins set free!

The staples, the canvas set free, a stretcher remains!

On it contains multitudes.

Kept on walking up the street.

Slept on the gravel beneath of our feet!

Growing pangs.

Two lovers beneath the covers, so pleasant, and elsewhere!

Our hearts apart yet together near gold.

No real plan to change the distractions of youth,

But moment by moment, and quotient by quotient, loving potion by loving potion,

We left to wander –

The streets.

Beneath the light of a moon sweetly, upon viewing three more points –

A cross held down-low –

The Light on High.

Another cross by my side. Mars in her eyes.

Two drinks from the bar and so far, so far yet to go!

Fifteen hands held on high!

Thirteen golden beaks with one made of black and one whitish pose.

Jesus Christ Damon,

5,000 dollars of Gold behind two glass windows already sold,

With a thousand or more to go.

## **Disconnection Notice**

Get it out, all you folks.

And I mean, ALL, you folks!

Hippy folks, sideways yolks, forgotten sulks,

Get it All OUT! Once I pooped and I thought,

Hmm, that's burnt sienna and one of my favorite colors!

Mothers, Father's, Friends, Voices... choices, choices.

Once I squeezed a tube of white paint and thought it was sputum,

Across a black canvas. Or, perhaps it looked like jism,

And once I painted a prism of rainbows and wondered

If it was really me who was the gay one. Psychological essences of life.

Twisting the knife into the back of reality. The world, this place, this studio...

It gets the best of, me. And Taurus's are scared of anarchy, and Lobsters are fish,

And goats are not orderly. But, then again, structures of White are harsh in the day's past.

And by everyone's account I might be gassed, but the white and black

Page is not empty on some days, and in this haze of days, grey looks best,

To me. Well, that and yellow. Hell, my disconnection notices linger year

After year in the dayz of haze in here. I just ignore the fucking things.

But on some nights they glow like phosphorescent paint on

Entrances as bright orange colored slips of paper, and each is signed

Personally and dated ahead of time by myself, warnings to buck up.

To get it right! And it's out of sight.

## Flowers

Sunflower, Rose, and lily  
The nights do get so chilly  
O! What of nights begat  
Except porridge to eat and rat

Sunflower hath no scorn  
The Rose doth wield its thorns  
Yet, the lily simply weds  
I to the white of her heads

My piercing eyes doth greet  
From smoking cigarettes in this heat  
And for a moment I concede  
Her beauty in victory

O! Yes, I have been known to cheat  
With the Rose and her thorns  
And when Sunflowers greet  
I have not retreated into the nights!

Lily doth thee care!  
Of whom I dare!

For when the sun does not stare,  
I cannot tempt a rose –

But lily greet!

## Gently

When you do it you'll do it,  
And she'll love you for it.  
They'll love you for it.  
I will love, YOU, for it.  
And you'll ride the lightning until perfect  
Thunder!  
So ride. One two three four,  
One two three four.  
One two three four.  
And a one and a two right outside your door!  
A loose lamp light, a mini fridge, a gallivanting way out the door!  
And lightning and then thunder apart for a millisecond's time!  
A spin on a dime, a walk to the chime!  
A garnish of parsley, a Tennessee Mash, with no hash, and a gas of a hoot in ol  
Sedalia. But paved alleyways flow uphill sometimes and glisten like golden piss,  
And by fan draft the fragrance of her in the places to be sets you free! And green  
fields come and forever they ride into distances at nighttime's calling of fragrant  
lands!

## Harshly

The studio's a blaze on Main Street with cigarettes and gin! A fact most men wouldn't agree to in this daze of lil misses and nephews and young women! Fuck it all here, I have one shot to get this right, so light the eternal spark and flame that lights ways out doors when passerbyers see me at it! Fantastic! What an attic of thought can do to youngsters is beyond our control, here.

But within control is this ashtray and segment of this poem! Because, with one horse by my backside, and another at home where she belongs... in front of me is everything! On but a string of light resting/hanging in the balance of cool breezes, by fan draft set in motion to delightful sounds and harsh steel pedals as they cycle round in front of you!

## **Inside the Dream**

In the morning time I awake  
To coffee and cigarettes, and Her!  
I argue, I dance, and prance around  
The studio floors doing all I can  
At nights.  
The work gets done.  
And I am done with this poem.

You see, poetry and paintings can  
Be light as feathers inside of  
This dream!

## Jack, the Man

Jack Shainman hopped on the L Train.  
Shyed down in his seat on that train.  
Headed to the heart of Brooklyn!  
Where I was mugged and shot at by  
Every hipster from mid-missouri to  
There. And yes, that's where my destiny  
Occurred. The vision that went on for miles.  
The endurance that was grand. The compressor,  
The stretcher, the staples by day and by night.  
The might in just the right places. The graces  
Of black and grey upon six-foot stretchers, handmade.  
The pain. The geeks by the windows. King's bar  
And a jar-head photographer. Conversations worth  
It all. That still hang on better than outsold mutherfuckers  
In Chelsea, the Lower East Side, and Uptown.

Then, Shainman's shoes hit the pavement and started walking.  
To and from there. Upon entry, kindly treated, and talked to about painting.  
He lasted 15 minutes, if that. Took one look at the paintings and wrapped  
It up quickly. Said, we already have a Brice Marden. I chased him as he  
Ran out that day. He stood in the sunshine when I asked kindly, which  
Paintings did you like best. He said, The Black Ones! In a heated way.

Hah!

What a pussy.

I was working in color by that time. Six, six-foot squares were displayed  
That day. 4 in black, grey, and white. Two in white. Enough to turn him  
Away the right way. The clean knife of wisdom. Room to grow.

But it burns way down even still, his attitude. The behavior of a kid.  
He must have been my age when he left. Full of piss and vinegar, at least  
Enough to get him back safely.

## Keep Writing

I always thought  
it was a good way  
to support the endeavor.

It wasn't clever.  
It didn't dismember the poems,  
what I thought were poems,  
into criticized piecemeal parts.

And now I have many years behind me,  
of writing. It's solid advice no matter how you cut it, gut it, rearrange it, derange  
it,  
or estrange it.

And the poems were light in their best ways! The daybreaks of crafts. The seldom  
buoyant life rafts drowned in the muck with a how in front of a sky!

You see, it's just writing! You attach to a theme, an emotion and go with the  
thing. Down eddies and driveways, between eating at Freddie's, and on highways,  
in byways near ditches where otherwise you'd get stitches from driving too fast,  
from the likes of it.

A cloud light as feathers, a bug passing between I and the weather, the fauna of  
backyards in June where hallelujah is in tune. Sweet the sounds of birds from  
back decks, nerds with sweaters on, and poetry of songs!

So bbq some words without the tongs this evening and see what happens! Human flesh to the heat of a phone's keyboard, or better yet human flesh to the Eastern skies, starbird riddled skies of solitude in this town gone rotten in the towns of men.

And do some writing. Yes, keep writing beneath it all, and for god's sake, enjoy it! Keep writing in the fall! Keep writing to the sound of it All! And in the winters too, it's like a zoo in the mind's eyes then too, and oh bless the Spring with writing!

Yes, O, Yes! Keep Writing.

To the berating sounds of church bells,  
And to the silence of hells,  
In this great country. Where coffee does its tricks, the bricks get laid to the mortar in the days, to the light, oh yes, and surely to the light of working. Keep writing!

## **Like a Bald Eagle into the Sunset**

Hover as you may

Sailing over yonder fields that sway

But recall, life is but one big game

So, play!

Do not forget your talons dear friends.

Do not forget your beaks!

Wither in defeat.

Or, as you are so bold to do,

Pluck some grand phrases from atop the soil,

“It is not light that we need, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

And all are under the guidance of one hand,

God,

And he has allowed you to run with wolves,  
To fly with falcons,  
To enter upon the soul of the masses in doing something special.  
So fly, do not hover.  
FLY! My dear lover.  
And doeth as the Eagle upon his dying day,  
And you may go in PEACE.

—The quotation is by, Frederick Douglass.

## **Moon**

In the day the moon is brighter,  
The sun illuminates it,  
Also.

As is the cleavage of your  
Breasts.

Sitting there –  
Across the table staring at myself!

I beg, I plead, I need  
A glimpse of your breasts,  
But I go without on this occasion.

As we hold hands into the moonlight,  
And the darkness.

At which time my gaze can rest.

And your stare can then plead  
With me to touch you!

## **Movement**

As a dancer dancing her  
Very last dance.

As Vixen prances.

As Pollock enhanced our world  
With his misty incantations  
Of Lavender songs!

So long to movement in these  
Days gone sour from smoking!

The hours will rejoice yet again  
In moving once I quit!

Or before then, so long as the right  
Side of my brain remains young,  
And cordial!

Cordial to thoughts of  
Motion is our potion in these  
Days!

Upon which a haze goes  
Something else!

Intimations of song!  
For which these lines long.  
For estimations of  
Sensitivity along byways of song!

## Night's End

I am fucking tired of it. Finally reaching my wit's end in here. The political situation in this country is a nightmare. The lying, twisting of truths, exacerbation of what's legal, not to mention values of this administration that have got me down. I'm painting, yes, but I feel for those who cannot in this mess. For those of lesser means who cannot afford to paint, or to write. And you may not think it takes monetary gains to write, but I'm telling you, when down on your luck, struggling to survive each day, it takes heart to write something of worth.

To not in the least be affected by the goings on outside of us. I'm tired. *Tired of something. And it's eating at the heart of us. This pandemic. The goings on outside.* The inner turmoil gone south from friction of this and that. Polarities of destruction that are working on us at every step of the way. The garbage outside, the beauty that she lacks, the strength in her eyes when she had strength to give. It wears you down. It comes around in threes. With her on her knees to a sneeze and a hallelujah, and the despised sound of it all. You get sick from watching it. Sick in the mind, at least if the hands remain idle. And it's miles, miles, to go from what I can tell.

But I've got my family. And I've had friends who would go miles for me just to watch me at it. And amidst this shrine of people I have risen. Risen to give back my love. My love. The love that tears at the heart of me for the people I've loved and are loving. You see, it's times like these when you see who matters the most. My mom, my dad. And I will give back to them in time with these. Black, white, and grey most of all! The ebb and flow of love and distrust, the cycling of the mind in front of the work. The working until the heart gives out at night's end.

The knees that bend, the back that lends its work, the turning of the clocks, one moving forward and the others in reverse. The lock that turns at the ends of nights in here. The mirror. And my image on it. Barely.

## **Old Enough**

Yes, old enough.

Old enough.

To strike while the iron isn't hot.

To catch a fish with no bait.

To end a stanza right on time.

To catch the crummy sounds

Of a carousel streaming

Out of a truck.

And each day I'm rewarded

At the end of it,

With Ice cream!

Or something like it!

## **Oppression**

### **I.**

Two thumbs siding with fate

Spoken from a stage with flags as backdrops

Pubic hair on the faces of the young behind their televisions

Billie Eilish is there to please, in need

And the youngsters are on their knees, with weed

No real message, but emotion

The way to be – in need

They sit before her

To speak out, for themselves –

But are murdered by her words; too oppressive to speak to them

So, the politicians politicize her

## II.

Trump's son is all revved up, anxious, slowing to the prompts, stopping, leaning heavily on them

Joe Biden too, leaning also on his prompts

So, who's it gotta be a ridiculous pantomime of lyrical nightmares or a nobody's son or a

Politician

You tell me, but I'm taking the musician, when in need, with or without a little sack of weed

Well, but you know me, the son always loses out in the end.

So, I will be stoned stuck on this couch of writing until the rain stops or the bells run out!

## **Our Hero**

I once road up on three white men holding a pistol to our heads! Maurice cried out, I sat more or less calmly in the driver's seat rolling my window up as fast as jax with a table of men sitting around them.

He was proud.

Matt Potter and I were next... outside in a, parking lot. Had my eyes on a clear-as-day-crazy, walking madly up the street, after three innocent young men. Wondering what he'd do. How I could catch him, while stuffing my mouth full of Jimmy Johns, and then he approaches us with a steady gaze beaded on him from me looking down to his junk of a gun in his mouth. Asked me, "What's up man! I seent you following me, drugged outa his mind!" He was right. I said, "I don't know what's going on, calmly!" He flinched and was utterly insane, confused for moments, and Matt engaged him shortly, thereafter. He just walked abruptly South holding his gun and frantically.

Matt was ready. I wasn't. Passed on the calmness. Confusion at its best! Later, Matt issues me a warning, "Damon Freed and I about got jacked this afternoon. Freed was cool as a cucumber!"

## **Paradise Found**

I go now

Into the truth once more

Not as a turnbuckle down an alleyway

Not as a rich man (or woman) in a penthouse

But as myself, altered by a perverse misunderstanding of truth

Into a painting

And what will come of it?

A voice

A will

A love letter so fierce as to leave a single papercut on the hands of a lady whom I adore.

And then she will be faced with the truth

And with a decision to make

May it also, be true.

For in these ages of times, we must go on into oblivion without the moon to guide us in here.

## **Perfection, for John Dorsey**

Few things in this world are perfect.

A publication left at will on the top, shelf,

For reading once in a while. At will,

With binding so sweet, delectably sweet.

With covers at odds with another...

Pink and black! Money that doesn't spend.

## Poem for Brianne Humphries

In the autumn winds the girl comes around,  
To celestial rounds of amber gold.  
And I am told, that you have a heart so strong,  
As to cut like a knife through butter.  
So in this world of hearts gone bad,  
There's nothing more I would like to do,  
Except, I have nothing better to, do.  
So indeed, as I go another round.  
I am found – In all her medals,  
And upon the petals of her hair goes something in return,  
My stare!

## Republicans

The failing of the winds of change  
The stalling in the rain  
The earthquake gone awry  
The eye of a hurricane  
The tornado that shakes everything in the wakes of men  
And their names are understood by a touch

And tough is their games of children  
No guff is their tamed resilience  
A penance to adhere to conventions

Republicans is their names by weight in Gold  
Hearts Sold  
Slave trades in Gold  
Old is their names  
Republicans by trades  
Number's games  
Yellow, like the sun of luck is their games

Cowardly, I say  
Like the sunbolts on main  
Within a seldom greyed out haze  
To the depth of songs

Indeed, it goes South in here on some days

In their haze  
Made for me  
To valiantly fight among them  
To not drown within them

Where I sit by choice within the eye of a storm gone rotten with men and women  
and toys  
Children treated like toys  
To the noise of radio play  
While all goes for not  
In the days

And it's a deadbolt of rays that will harken them in this haze  
Until realization of days gone by has them underneath this sun-a-blaze  
But, I haven't seen it happen yet.

## Signs

So says the symbolist poet,  
Everything is in the signs,  
And you know it.  
The lost children under night's  
Sky without a moon or torch  
To go by.

When down on luck!  
When working.  
Once the wallet is empty,  
Searching.

For a sign!

## Skyscrapers

I.

I went to the Millet show, this afternoon.  
I viewed haystacks that looked like skyscrapers!  
People that looked like ants.  
I was one of those ants!

Come down to Earth every once in a while.  
Visit a Museum!

Get out of your own damned heads!

The beds have been made for years – out of straw.  
The beds where we go to rest,  
And to draw.  
To sleep a planetary dream of rest,  
And to adore.  
And to snore at the lesser works of accomplishment,  
But then, to realize they are what it takes to get better.  
In looking at them, you realize what it might take, to get better.

A, slowing down. A, steady hand. A gaze of incomprehensible strength, in solitude.

But most of all, humility.

II.

You know Einstein asked a question once.

“If a mouse looks at the universe does it change the universe?”

His question, not mine!

Yes, is my answer.

And his answer you might ask...?

Was no!

So now I have a question of my own to ask.

It was difficult to stare up from below, wasn't it, Einstein?

## **Slovenly, to Stuart, my friend of friends**

I'm done writing about the virus in the ways you understand!

What about your virus that strikes a match at your cigarette between the fingers in my hand.

The damaged lands. The isolated man. The patch grown white with hair on a marble floor!

Yes, I'm here to close the doors on this. To rid you of masks in this winter heat.

To find not only the beat of the lands but to stand and sit with magnificence.

I cry at the thought of you. I shed not a tear in the aftermath of death.

Numb. Thinking dumb. Thoughts for fun!

I bear with it, and you? What about it striking, you!

Are you ready to die...

Will you fly? Or, will I sit at this terminal of painting at the night's end!

To find your end of the table upended some more? To bellow heartfully a snore of patience.

To withdraw in solitude upon broken windowpanes in patience. Drip drop drip drop. Goes the sound of the doves outside. Will you spin off your axis some more or be like the revolving door?

Letting in the sounds of cotton picked by slavery in the South? Or mimic it with cotton candy to your mouths! You fucking hicks. Pick up sticks is all this is, to you. Hiccup kicks is all you have to say! With bitches in fords going thataway ^

Or, thataway, down. You see, slovenly halfwits only exist by night, and I am one not to be fucked with in your way.

## **Smoking**

In all the world's joy –  
I cannot live to see another die  
At the hands of my smoking –  
The stress is something remarkable –  
Isn't it?

I go upstairs to find a video –  
Scared I won't make it down the steps.

And yet I do it!

## Spiral

In all my days.

I've not seen a man, nor a woman turn a circle complete,

For in the mind's eye is a spiral evanescent, their difference is the same.

Stick to what you know, and you will find out.

“You see, you will know.”

Always learning, and knowing are the same, thing.

An auspicious thing, knowing? Perhaps,

Not what you wanted.

But what you, deserved!

## **Stand the Test of Time**

The thrust of steel from the chamber of my mind  
The rust must be polished  
The crust dampened  
The earth, still

The fools enlightened  
The smarts enchanted!  
The surfaces sanded by time  
The paintings aging  
Forged with the Sun

The storm inside is raging

The wind is effacing time

The glamour of it all  
The heaviness lifted

The delight of a gifted mentality

The bolted weight of days set in stone  
The lifting to the bone  
The waging labor  
The earnest chore  
The settlement of scores.

## Star-Crossed & Found, on the Holy Ground

I star-crossed a sign on Tuesday morning,  
Said the Rapture is beginning. Man, yawl  
Got dinosaurs turning over in their graves  
And waves of relief across sages' mouths  
From here to holy vows and cows in pastures  
On the graves of raptures. It isn't 360 B.C.E.  
Up in this place to be and nor is it Chinese  
Or monks that lift the diseases of edible skunks  
From here to there. But the end of days is  
Coming if you worship a cigarette smoke haze  
From here to there. And while I may have the  
Rites of passage from Jesus AND the masses  
To smoke what it is I want in here, the NEWS  
Strikes fiercer than any warranted piercer of  
Megalodon Sharks from then and now. With  
A divided country you'd think the south won  
Again and that churchgoers would repent but  
Damn the luck if such apocalyptic preying  
On the weak isn't my luck on this day gone  
Bad from smoking in here. Cigarette lungs  
And bat viruses go hand in hand in here,  
But masks, yes masks, like always do the trick  
To wart off bad juju, and that's a fact. From  
Here to New York and back that's a fact. We  
All have at least two identities anyways, you

Have heard it said before, so don't close the  
Door on Science and the Arts just yet. My cure.  
I think the Scientists deserve a break from  
Working around the clock as well as the artists  
Who have socked away what moneys they could.  
The Scientist should visit a museum and the  
Artists sciences every once in a while, for relief.  
And then its back to work, for good grief in this  
Life gone bad from it all. And the cure might  
Happen then. Either through love of the craft  
Or through divine inspiration then. But I'm  
Banking on both to get us there. So cut the checks  
Worth cashing, the masks worth coughing into,  
The sanitizer worth soaps, and pray or better yet  
Hope right into the faces of losers. Because snoozing  
On the NEWS, well is as false as it gets from  
Bloomberg to Hollywood fits. To Fox, to MSNBC  
In this tree of knowledge. Get upset from it all,  
And do your best to bawl right into the faces of  
Them all for not doing their jobs right, those  
Fascist pigs! I've got cigs to smoke.

## Still

Still haven't found a woman who can keep up  
Still haven't found a window wide enough  
Still haven't found a beach worth walking day and night  
Still  
Yes still, I haven't found her

Still haven't found a picture worth stopping on  
The colors keep dropping down  
The beat keeps me coming around  
And yes, I still hear these sounds!

Still haven't found a woman that could keep me down  
Still haven't found a decent town that trumps this one  
Still haven't found the sight of ages worth my very last wages  
Still  
Yes still, God has his way and I have mine.  
And you have your thoughts and I have thine.

## **Stuff, isn't Art!**

I took a stroll around Lowes – only the necessities – A roll of tape and some Jujufruits. I have a work on paper, biggest yet, back at the studio worth working on. And I have my magic wand in hand but am setting it down in need of something stronger. The works are black, deep black and white and grey. Plus, I don't do yellow brick roads in the midst of pandemics. Real, I'm needing it real. And this is the deal.

Perhaps someone should paint fantasy for hope, but I would rather tell it straight. So here I am offering up what seems like a roll of tape to you in otherwise known sweetened songs of blight. And hell, I might even show you how to paint with words if it all goes to getting too bold. And some things sold over a year ago, but the hard reality is... there isn't anybody buying my stuff.

And that's it, stuff, is what they call it! Stuff. Well, we do not make, "stuff." We make art.

## **Survival of The Fittest**

There is the food you eat.

Thee particles of light.

The painful silence of

Mind in the day.

And the things you say.

And all are in Love.

Or should be!

## **The Alpha and the Omega**

So, I had this theory of the Alpha and Omega –  
While one called the shots the other was the beggar.  
What some don't realize is that they depended  
On each other, kind of like your Father and your  
loving mother! And what fewer realize is that some  
people are both, kind of like God, or, a single  
man with hope. Because when you're single and  
an artist, you must be both the dumbest and the  
smartest! And, when in a relationship and  
someone steps on you that is just an Alpha  
thinking they cannot lose. But, as the Taoist's said,  
"Force is followed by loss of strength!" And that's  
when the Omega moves up in rank. This is  
interchange, my friends, so take it to the bank!  
When looking after you, I strongly recommend  
considering the two! For, what of the artist if not  
a winner, a loser, but most of all a true blue.

## **The Balance**

It comes in waves  
Of light and sound  
Eyes and ears  
Well fed by years  
Of poems and paintings.

I'm starving from cash and tears  
Not crying, and buying whatever's near,  
Nothing and something.

Older and stronger,  
Yet the days go by longer and are bolder!  
Weakened by death,  
And the smoldering of romance  
Is gone from here on the wind,  
formerly stoked by the wind!

And always at a distance from here, too far to see,  
The crackling visions are all that remain in my windows.

But I get by, somehow.

## The Black Knife

A phone that is memory taking.  
The *will* that drives me.  
The felt-tip-pen.  
Memories written down on a page  
Only to be expressed in writing –  
By way of the phone in my pocket.

The absolute darkness of found thought.  
The eight-ball in a corner pocket.  
The monitor going to sleep at night.

The afterthought!

Darkness,

with miles to go

## **The Bully**

What's a bully without his cronies?  
Propped up by attention and sheep,  
Preying on the weak,  
The mindless.

But not the mindless due to their own faults,  
Because education is too costly and intimidatingly so,  
Yet, people, even the weaker of the masses,  
Want on the insides,  
What is best for their families.

So, show them what is best Joe Biden,  
Show them the strident means of solitude in this time of pain.  
Withdraw them from the people of blasphemy and pain,  
Our weak people,  
Show them with heart, what there is to be gained on the insides.  
Standing apart, from the negativity caused by this administration.

When bullies bullied us as a kid,  
How you overcame the bully was to isolate, him, or her!

Ignore him or her.  
Do not tear them apart with name calling and threatening behaviors,  
But dampen their sounds, with strength in solitude by us.  
Give them nothing to react to, no people to behave around.

Voices need a recipient.

Watch this person swell up with tears amidst the hopeless nights.

Then, then, they will be very, very weak!

Let him or her be weak, then. And slay him or her with just and righteous behaviors.

Run before their negative behaviors in the Sun of playgrounds, smiling and toying with strength and weakness, for your own sakes. Be Happy amidst the playgrounds and outlets leading to and from the playgrounds in this Great Country!

Watch them swell with desire –

Self-destructing, with weak insides

Watch the Bully

Longing to play with the others

With no outlet left to him or her.

Then, and only then, will they ask for forgiveness!

## **The Cuties of Song**

The ink that writes, soaks  
The paper, thin as parchment

Yet it goes barreling down  
The avenues wide & strong

Vacant of incantations of  
Song yet belongs to those  
Times lost beneath the ashes  
Of yesteryears

If you were to dig some  
Up, you may find them  
Strewn throughout many of  
Lands in tears

Hopkins, Gerard, nearly, was  
Forgotten. Ashbery a poet  
Nearly forgotten by some  
To whom you may know.

Cold – Detached – Behind  
His lenses he knew so well  
Of glass only to be warming  
Sometimes.

Storming Sometimes!  
Snoring *ALWAYS* to life's  
Many achievements only to  
Focus acutely behind *HIS*  
Looking glasses, vividly,

To maybe capture the eternal  
Song, the infinity beauties,  
Of cuties of song,

As I did.

## **The Drive Thru**

There's a little coffee shop in town  
I pull up to hear my sweetie talk

I hear Japanese coming from the speakers  
I feel like an asshole, but it's them

They're playing with me

Then

I wonder, where's the fucking camera at

So, I play my part in the game  
I say, "It sounds like Japanese!"

Little girl's voices... giggling in the background.

One mature voice steps up to the microphone,

At least 21 and says, Would you like a randy...

I say, what the fucking hell is a Randy!?

She says, "It's a bloody coffee, Randy. A bloody, coffee!"

So, to the window it is.

But I left out the fucking part, already!

The part where I say,

“Japanese, I don’t understand Japanese, but I do British,

And my name Ain’t, Randy!”

## **The Idiot Winds are Blowing Strongly**

In this polarizing world of pandemics and politics, you'd think that some of you would want to feel the pain that I have on the insides and the beauty that comes out of suffering. I mean, what are your guys's political and pandemic provisions? Fucking toilet paper to wipe your asses with or is it the pages of this book that help you through the night's periling promises of nothingness. You let me know, because I'm selling nothing in here, and that's fine, but I'm questioning the promises of your guys's plates and palates? I'm thinking they're all quite full by now from the poems I've allowed you to eat, and to drink up like wine from this tower of song.

Well, perhaps you're full by now, but I'm just beginning to think you're done and that's no fun. So fuck off with your abilities to depress a man whose time is spent pleasing others. Brice Marden said once when asked how to deal with it all when a man starts selling his work before he's ready. He said, well, first they try to starve you! Then..., and well, he had more to say, but I say it's been years since I've been ready. And frankly, I'm tired from it all. Tired.

So, fuck off with your money to spend on the essences of life, because it's not me that you want. It's likely more suitable that you look at flowers, stroll through the parks, walk your dogs that are barking from not enough sun, and yes I'm mocking the arching of your piss from beers in bars that glisten to your roaring of such dulled sounds of bliss. Such dulling sounds of idiot winds blowing in on me from here to the porches on 4<sup>th</sup> street and back. I mean, if I can do this without, then you fucks can go to hell for spreading viruses to one another from here to there.

And it's a low-down idiot wind that's got me going in here. A low-down idiot wind. So, keep riding to the stores and back on your bicycles made of glass, and in your cars with the windows down, to breath the smoke bellowing out from mine. Because I'll be fine. But you won't. And I hope it makes you think a time or two about morality when my wind meets those lips of yours, because it's likely the cleanest air you'll taste around here. Just fuck off.

## The New York Sound

Uptight and smug  
Dodging twerps and thugs  
Subways screeching  
Teeth clinching

Headphones on the streets  
Disconnected beats  
Not enough money to heed  
The notions in my head  
Better off dead

But not on rooftops made of glass  
With a fine, fine ass to boot  
With some fine, fine grass to root and smoke  
With some blokes in arm's reach

Necks to grab and snag  
Heads to roll  
In the neighborhood's strolling of young girls and boys  
With no toys  
Just art  
To get them there!

But, oh my Gawd, that sound,  
Make a grown man's head swivel around!

To the look of young women  
Dilettantes  
Blondes and brunettes bleached in fishnets  
Black headed youngsters  
Gunslingers to the sounds of trains in the distances

Instances of men gone awry  
Foolish men and women gone awry  
Too much pain to cry  
The well's all dried up

But there's still a fifth in my cup  
A gulp and a what's up!  
To the sound of, What's Up Gentlemen and Women  
To the sound of heavens and hells  
To the sounds of bells on churches in downtowns

Wallstreet crutches  
Made to bolster the Duchesses of men

The Hudson at night  
River Paintings at the MET  
The psilocybin and street cred'  
MDMA on the upper Deck  
Fireworks and Frank Stella  
Black in the Nighttime!

Friday nights and dining

Dreaming and finding  
To the Sounds of it ALL!

And we had a BALL!

## **The Painless Skies, for my friend Angel Gomez**

A song comes on the radio with enough strength to turn the pale blue summer skies to a cold and stark white. Bb guns and gunpowder, enough to kill a snake living in the soil, a large snake of mischievous nature! Perhaps that same snake that has bound so many to its pages of knowledge. But my thinking ran dry last night, upon the cans running dry of gunpowder and smoking. Thought foregoing the mechanisms by night. Burning orange starbursts. Crack, crack, crack goes the 22 rifle against the painless skies!

## **The Potential**, after Justin Horn

How'd I meet you, Justin? If you're out there?

You know that time those two girls sat me  
Down on someone's bed in your house you  
Shared with Perkins? Yeah, totally botched  
It when they both asked me to have sex with  
Them. Threesome time! The embarrassment  
Was overwhelming, plus, they were meth-heads!  
I don't even remember their names! One was  
A sweet blonde, and the other a demure onyx.

Anyhow, I remember you at the height of your  
Game, all clean and shit, calling me from Sedalia.  
We talked like never before on that day. It was always  
Difficult walking into the pain thick bedroom of  
Marijuana smoke bellowing out in front of posters,  
Like Metallica and Pantera.

They say, you know, that you killed yourself with  
The bottle, intentionally. Ah, I don't know about  
It, but I will say you had the potential of centuries.

The wherewithal to go to school and pass classes.  
The need to, at one point. You spoke highly of  
Your stepmom! The one in which I don't know

Much about. I think she was the one who was our  
City mayor at one point! Well, that she was.

So, here we are. Loving on one another straight to hell,  
And heaven. Me smoking, your drinking. They say it  
Catches up to a man. I say I have permission from Jesus.  
What about you? Did they give you the rites of passage  
Down here from up there?

See you in the afterlife. My brother, if you ever get there?

## **The Quilts are Sewn**

Upon the stairs goes something else.  
An ear, a masterpiece.  
An earring of gratitude.  
Hearing their cries!  
Wear something dyed.

The slavery I did.  
The checks I paid.  
From there they were made.  
Into quilts for looking at.

Canvases of yesteryears.  
We fought for survival.  
The fighting was trivial.  
But our survival wasn't.

So, I paid our debts.  
With a masterpiece of hearing.  
The clearing of underbrush.  
The sounds of pain.  
In through my ears and OUT with the rain.

A raincoat of suffering.  
A painting in front of here.  
It looks like rain.

But is something of tears.

## **The Snail**

A snail is walking near a cave entrance  
She has but a little shell she sleeps inside of  
Her trail is as innocent as she is  
Napping along the ways  
Innocently

There are no drawings of her on the cave wall  
Yet, the caveman awakes to her distance from the cave's entrance  
She decides it's good to let her walk  
After all his drawings are as her  
Slow, timely, enduring

You cannot even see them take form in the night to firelight  
You cannot even see them in the mornings to the sounds of thunder  
Rain does not pervade them, the leaking  
As the leaking of lamp light  
Pervades

These words

Big artists and fame rise to the surface  
Buoyant like dolphins amidst the noonday sunlight  
I always wanted to be secure  
I always wanted to be known

But, never famous.

You see, the ignoramus and the genius are but one at times  
And I am him

## **THE TRUTH**

The truth is...

It's not in art

It's not in religion

It's in love,

**THE TRUTH.**

## **The Willing**

I used to force it. The letters.  
Now I write when it comes to myself.  
Staying open is like getting caught on guard.  
Slaying the dragon when the lightning strikes.  
Ready and willing. Silent then thrilling.  
With all you youngsters getting up the courage  
To do exactly that!

## **This is It**

Walking to hipsters in the streets  
Having troubles finding beats beneath  
They think they have it all figured out  
The hipsters

Arguing over what is and what's not cool to think about  
Over which artist is hip and which isn't  
Schtick

Chicks and babes  
Dicks are hardened by them  
But what's a babe?

What was cool last week this week isn't

So, you tell me, which is it?

The cellular damages in the parks, or the lights and the harkened saints?

The ain'ts and the perks!

The twerps and the jerks!

Well, I've been all of them. So who is it, then?

It's all of us, together. Supporting the best of them. To each his own.

## Touch

A hand.  
Caressed.  
By another's is to connection  
What song is to poetry, morning glory.  
That's the story of love!  
To go beyond what can't be touched,  
but touched at first,  
Nonetheless!

To caress –  
To then *feel* the bone and soft tissue  
within, Love!

Without love lost no abjectness to it!  
Only Love!

My dear lover!

## **Two Things I Ain't**

A grunt or a shleper!

No, I ain't no grunt and I ain't no shleper!

No, this ain't no stunt and I ain't no leper!

But I do like my fun with a little salt and pepper.

Some savory words to sweeten this letter.

The grunt sits tight until he's told what to do,

Lets out a moan to the sounds of his shoes squeaking in the rain!

God help him if he sees a little pain!

The shleper follows like no one else in this world.

Would do anything for the taste of his girl.

But salt and pepper graces his curls,

Therefore, the world isn't his anymore.

So, she shuts the front door after him.

As soon as he gets in!

## Upon Listening to Charles Bukowski

My next-door neighbor mows his lawn at the dire  
Edge. Right before the complaints come rolling in.  
Waits till I damn near am ready to explode and  
I come home and its mowed. Two days afterwards  
All the dead grass that has gone unraked from his  
Old lawnmower is sitting on top of the grass, dead!

And when he mows, he mows. Sweating, takes him  
5 minutes at best. He's mowed the shrubs, the plant life,  
The god damn flowers for God's sake! He's mowed it  
All down. And what's worse is he's frantic about it.  
In a frenzy, he doesn't care about property lines. And  
A man, I like a man who understands property lines.

And his wife, all pinned in goes to bed at night with  
Him and his four children! With the kids running  
Wild for him. But he never draws a line in the sand.  
Never tells them when enough is enough. My God,  
She probably hasn't been laid right in 4 years.

But these little brats run around on him for months  
On end. And what's worse, is my smoking. In through  
The windows of his in the mornings when I wake to  
Drink my coffee on the porch. And his cat comes around  
Interrupting my piece as well. Fucking thing!

Well, anyhow, I was here first. And until he fucking  
Stops mowing my lawn the smoke will bellow. Hell,  
If it gets any worse his wife will go to hell with her  
On my pillow. Judgement is harsh in these times gone  
Rotten from gin. And young mommas need love, too.

On the other side of me, it's Joe and Linda! Good  
Neighbors. One stopped drinking years ago. Bless him  
For it! The other, is wise. And I'm thankful, thankful  
For the yardwork. Thankful for the blessing. And thankful  
For him and them.

They sit on their porches, like me, and sip their coffee,  
Even into the evenings, at times. He works a job nearby,  
She is a hairdresser! Beautiful. With younger eyes than  
His. Grey beautiful natural greys. Silver, even. We talk  
Football, he and I. Actually just yesterday, football.  
You know, you can talk things like that with him.  
His brother lives down the block. Rides a motorcycle  
To the bookstores. To the libraries. He's on my route  
To this studio nearly every morning and evening  
Coming home at nights. A good man as well.

But football. I'd kick all their asses if they tried to  
Write something like this about me! And yeah,  
The Chiefs won the Superbowl last year, but it's  
All out when I do this thing here. So, with a hallelujah

and a how you doing I say hi to them all every now  
and again. Because what's their business is mine  
every once in a while, in this neighborhood gone sour  
from good music while the Mexicans pump it through  
their garages at night.

And you know, I'm about fed up with them too.  
A man needs a good lay every now and again to get  
The juices flowing. To add a little pep in his step.  
And by God it isn't me who needs it. But this young  
Man does need his rest in the nighttimes of calling  
Young women who need him. So, pardon me if I'm  
Asking for a little fucking respect around this town.  
And every other town from around here. This shit  
Of hittin the gyms in order to get laid is overrated.

Especially when you have a brain the size of an elephant's.  
And yes, I might be scared of you but I ain't running  
To tell you about it, am I?

## Vomit

I don't write with a theme –  
Too often.  
But when I do – I soften.

Sometimes, in reverse, I make  
Mistakes out of the hardened  
Canisters of days.  
I paint a mark in the wrong place.

Yet, I press on in a haze!

The smoke persisting from  
These lungs.

For fun.

## Writing

Does the writing suffer from the paintings?

Perhaps?

I would have spent so much more time reading,  
if it was the other way around.

But, as it was, I began as a painter.

It has occupied my time.

I had a studio mate in art school once,  
he dated a smart girl of whom I didn't know very well.

Greg always bragged about how "well read" she was.

So, one time, courageous as I was, I asked her,

Do you ever catch up to the others in reading?

I hadn't read many books by then.

She said, "No. But..."

There was something to her voice, then.

Her tone.

It was old.

She liked me.

She liked my socks, too. Harsh White.

She knew something about me, then.

Her hesitation, it spoke about lifetimes.

And it was in my eyes.

## **You Gotta Hold On**

Around here the clock strikes noon and it's  
Coffee and a macaroon! Yellow, pink, and  
Aqua, full of all that macaroon stuffing in  
The coloration of her Chakra. And okra  
In the summers next to ham is a pleasant  
Meal for us. With some applesauce on the side.

And I hide then. Onto the studio to do  
Some work! Yes, I take that trip to that  
Part of town! And the blacks all contribute to  
My mindset in here, and my friends are in fear of  
Them, but really I don't sweat them! Because all  
Of them, and I, is running for the stuffing.  
And let it be for my little pink and yellow baby,  
This morning. And God help us, aqua is still draining  
From the spickets, and that the God upstairs is punching  
Our tickets to the ride. But it's actually Midnight  
And time to go with a heavy glow from the coffee I'm  
Sipping on. And the light is beaming. So, I've got to  
Let you down the hard way and not amidst my dreaming!

There ain't no macaroon! There never was. There ain't even  
Any goons to say goodbye or to quarrel with in this studio  
Made of glass. But I ain't weeping inside of it, or maybe  
I am? I mean, you all just take your sideways glances

Inside from outside, and keep on riding past us anyways. And  
If you didn't keep on trucking, I would probably murder you  
Anyways. Justice is cruel at times.

You know, it gets that way sometimes beneath the heat in  
Here, with the lamplight leaking and the sunshine  
Bleeding all day and all night long! With my hands tired  
From typing and my eyes squinting from painting all  
Day long praying to the currency of love,  
To the currency of love.

So yeah, I'll wake up half-refreshed, like always to the  
Dark of 3am, somehow, still holding onto it all. To the  
Under-glow of leafiness-light, to the shrub-light of back porches,  
and coffee. And perhaps I'll get lucky and catch a white  
bloom of strength where the glimmer of hope hides by  
day, but is reflected by porchlight back to me and by  
crepuscular chance-rays, serendipitous and ridiculous,  
all in the same striking, aching, pissed off motion!

And it's a mental-mind-breaking potion of love and  
Care in here, and out there, that gets us going again from  
Here to there. So enjoy it at least, this time. And  
It's time to go. To go. Anywhere. But here. Now.

Ain't it all so queer!

## Your Beautiful Shows

All of you artists with your paint in hands  
There's just one little thing you should understand  
It's not a picture you want or a message to say  
It's not the darkness in the alley it's the sun during the day

It's not the majesty of the land or the intelligence of the grid  
It's not the truth at hand or the lies and the fibs  
It's the power of knowing it's a discipline and a path  
It's not the mystical inspiration or the rational math

It's not some fame hiding beneath your hats  
Neither is it the glory due to that  
It's the power of knowing you're the only one  
Who can say what you say amongst the weight of tons

And if you think that weight can't be lifted  
Because you're not skilled and neither are you gifted  
There's one other thing that I need to point out  
It doesn't matter if you use a pretty whisper or an ugly shout

To express the emptiness of years or the fullness of moments  
All the prettiness or ugliness you'll ever know  
Is in the afterlife of your beautiful shows

## **Damon Freed – Bio**

I am an artist who cherishes balance, reason, and ambiguity; and I express it through a variety of working methods, from abstracted realities to nonobjective paintings of grids, I believe reality exists on the edge of perception. And while my Dad has been my best and greatest influence Agnes Martin and Brice Marden's work are among them.

Mr. Freed received his B.F.A. from the School of Visual Arts in New York City where he graduated with honors. His M.F.A. is from Hunter College, City University of New York. Freed has studied with such luminaries as Jack Whitten, Marilyn Minter, David Chow, Juan Sanchez, Sanford Wurmfeld, Tobi Kahn, Lucio Pozzi, Tim Rollins, Alice Aycock, Susan Crile, Anton van Dalen, Suzanne Anker, Donald Kuspit, and Katy Siegel among others. He has been exhibited in galleries in New York City, Saint Louis, Kansas City and Columbia, Missouri.

In writing, his influences are his mom and dad, sister and brothers, and friends, mostly. My inspirations are my family and dearest friends, and the people I meet in every direction! Freed was not formally trained in poetry but is an avid writer of works and spoken word. He can be reached at [damonfreed@gmail.com](mailto:damonfreed@gmail.com).

